

Pollution, Safeguarding, and Preserving the Environment from an Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

Polluting, protecting and preserving the environment are important buzzwords that affect the well-being of humans and other living beings. Islam has a positive perspective and commitment to environmental conservation. Islam teaches that mankind is the responsible khalifah of God on earth in order to care for, maintain and protect God's creation. Islamic teachings also prohibit humans from damaging or polluting the environment for any reason. This article aims to deepen the topic of the environment from an Islamic perspective. The research method used is a literature study by reviewing sources that are relevant to the issue at hand. The results of this study show that Islam has teachings that are harmonious, sustainable, and support environmental conservation, such as managing environment without polluting, being kind to animals and plants, maintaining cleanliness and beauty of the environment. This article also provides some knowledge to develop environmental awareness and education.

Keywords: awareness, environment, Islam, pollution, preserving

Abstrak

Pencemaran, menjaga, dan melestarikan lingkungan adalah desas-desus penting yang berpengaruh pada kesejahteraan manusia dan makhluk hidup lainnya. Agama Islam memiliki perspektif dan komitmen yang positif mengenai pelestarian lingkungan. Islam mengajarkan bahwa umat manusia adalah khalifah Allah di bumi yang bertanggung jawab agar dapat merawat, memelihara, dan melindungi ciptaan Allah. Ajaran agama Islam juga melarang manusia untuk merusak atau mencemari lingkungan dengan alasan apapun. Pada artikel ini bertujuan sebagai pendalaman topik terhadap lingkungan dalam sudut pandang agama Islam. Adapun metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah studi literatur dengan cara mengkaji sumber-sumber yang relevan terhadap isu yang ada. Hasil dari studi ini menampilkan bahwa agama Islam mempunyai ajaran-ajaran yang selaras, berkelanjutan, dan mendukung pelestarian lingkungan, seperti pengelolaan lingkungan tanpa mencemari, berbuat baik terhadap hewan dan tumbuhan, menjaga kebersihan dan keasrian lingkungan. Artikel ini juga memberikan beberapa pengetahuan untuk mengembangkan kesadaran dan edukasi terhadap lingkungan.

Kata kunci: Islam, kesadaran, lingkungan, melestarikan, pencemaran

BACKGROUND

The environment has become a major issue in the current era of globalization with various serious problems, including global warming, climate change, air, water, soil pollution, and ecosystem damage. Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) reveals that about 13 million people die each year from diseases related to environmental pollution. Meanwhile, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) reports that around 60% of vertebrate animal populations have been lost since 1970 due to human habitat and ecosystem destruction.

Religion, including Islam, plays an important role in shaping human values, attitudes and actions towards the environment. Islam teaches the obligation to protect and preserve God's creation. However, many Muslims still lack care and understanding of Islamic teachings on the environment. Therefore, Islam-based environmental education is needed to increase Muslims' awareness and responsibility towards the environment. This education aims to integrate Islamic values with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors needed to safeguard the environment and participate in its preservation.

THEORETICAL STUDY

Islam teaches the concept of tawhid, which is the belief in one God who created the universe. In this perspective, the universe is seen as evidence of God's handiwork, and humans have a responsibility as khalifah (stewards) of the earth. This creates a moral obligation to look after and preserve God's creation. The Qur'an states in Surah Ar-Rum (30:41) "There is corruption on land and in the sea because of the deeds of human beings; Allah wills that they should taste some of the consequences of their deeds, so that they may return (to the right path)." This verse confirms that environmental damage is the result of human actions and is a punishment for their behavior. In the context of Indonesia, an urgent environmental issue is the mounting waste problem. This is one of the significant environmental challenges in Indonesia. The archipelago, with its large population and rapid economic growth, generates a huge amount of waste every year. This waste significantly pollutes the environment and has serious impacts on ecosystems

and human health. Indonesia is the 5th largest waste-producing country in the world by 2020. This was noted in a World Bank report entitled The Atlas of Sustainable Development Goals 2023. According to the report, in 2020 Indonesia produced around 65.2 million tons of waste.

No	Nama	Nilai / Ton
1	Tiongkok	395.081.376
2	Amerika Serikat	265.224.528
3	India	189.750.000
4	Brasil	79.069.584
5	Indonesia	65.200.000
6	Rusia	60.000.000
7	Meksiko	53.100.000
8	Jerman	50.627.876
9	Jepang	42.720.000
10	Prancis	36.748.820

Source: databoks.katadata.co.id

Picture 1. Top 10 Waste Producing Countries in the World (2020)

Islam teaches the importance of maintaining cleanliness of the environment and preventing pollution as part of the obligation as khalifah of the earth. This theoretical study illustrates how the Islamic view of the environment can be applied in handling these issues. Islamic principles such as maintaining cleanliness and protecting God's creation should be the foundation of efforts to protect and preserve the environment in the Indonesian context.

RESEARCH METHOD

Literature study is used as a research method in this article to collect, assess, and compile relevant literature sources on Islamic religious views on the environment as well as environmental issues in Indonesia, such as the problem of waste piling up which is bad for the environment. This approach was chosen because this research aims to explore Islamic religious views in the context of the environment and integrate them with actual environmental issues. There are several stages in this method, including data collection, source selection, source evaluation, synthesis and analysis, and compilation. This literature study research method provides a strong foundation to explain and analyze Islamic religious views on the environment and relate them to actual environmental

issues. This allows this research to integrate religious insights with the environmental challenges faced in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The environment in an Islamic perspective is everything in the universe created by Allah as signs of His power, wisdom and mercy. The environment includes the universe in which there are humans, plants, animals, other living things, and non-living things such as the earth, sky, stars, moon, sun, water, air, fire, and others. The environment also includes everything on earth that is home and a source of life for humans and other living things. The environment in the Islamic view can be called a sign of Allah's existence. Nature provides a way for humans to know His existence. Allah created the environment with perfect size, proportion, balance and harmony in accordance with Allah's wisdom and iradah. The environment also has functions that are interrelated and dependent on each other in maintaining the balance and harmony of the universe. The environment is a system that is a unity of space with all objects, forces, conditions, and living things, including humans and their behavior that affect the continuity of life and the welfare of humans and other living things as Allah's Word in the Qur'an Surat Al-Baqarah verse 164.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي
الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ
السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth; the alternation of the day and the night; the ships that sail the sea for the benefit of humanity; the rain sent down by Allah from the skies, reviving the earth after its death; the scattering of all kinds of creatures throughout; the shifting of the winds; and the clouds drifting between the heavens and the earth—"in all of this" are surely signs for people of understanding.

Source: quran.com

Picture 2. Qur'an Surat Al-Baqarah verse 164

Waste Problems and Efforts to Reduce Them

Environmental issues are global problems that have been recognized as serious and complex. Increasing population, limited natural resources, and the reckless use of modern technology for environmental exploitation have led to a decline in environmental quality. The impacts of this include erosion, depletion of the ozone layer, and ecological imbalances that can threaten survival (Busriyanti, 2016: 260). This situation also occurs in various countries, including Indonesia, where the summer season is often characterized by drought and haze, while the rainy season often causes flooding. Although it does not happen in all regions, it reflects the country's environmental problems. One of the environmental challenges in Indonesia is managing the environment well, especially the issue of waste. Some people underestimate this problem by simply littering. Some may feel that Indonesia has a large area of fertile land, so they don't feel guilty or contribute to environmental damage by their actions in littering. Although it may seem trivial, waste is actually a very serious and complicated issue. The environment is vital for all life, including humans, animals, and plants. To ensure survival and well-being, it's essential to maintain the functions that support life. Understanding the complexities of the environment through careful study is necessary for effective environmental management. This management helps preserve productivity, prevent destruction, and ensure sustainability for future generations. Environmental management is a responsibility given to humans by Allah, aimed at achieving prosperity and a just society in harmony with divine law without force or violence, but through education and awareness.

1. The Impact of Waste Problems in the Environment

According to data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN), Indonesia will produce 19.45 million tons of waste in 2022. Of this amount, the majority or 39.63% of it comes from household waste generation. The next largest source of national waste generation comes from commerce, which is 21.07%. Then 16.08% of waste generation comes from the market. Another 7.14% of waste generation comes from commercial/industrial/other areas, 6.82% from public facilities, 5.96% from offices, and 3.3% from other sources. Based on its type, the majority of national waste generation is food waste with a proportion of 41.55%. Followed by plastic waste with a proportion of 18.55%. Then there is waste in the form of

wood/ranting (13.27%), paper/cardboard (11.04%), metal (2.86%), fabric (2.54%), glass (1.96%), rubber/leather (1.68%), and other types of waste (6.55%).

The author in this context argues that handling this type of household waste problem cannot rely solely on technical solutions, but must be accompanied by the integration of religious principles. This kind of household waste problem not only impacts the environment, but also has consequences for humans and other living things. Dwi Nugroho in his research titled "The Dangers of Plastic and Crackle Packaging" revealed that plastic waste, because it is not derived from biological compounds, has properties that are difficult to degrade (non-biodegradable). Plastic is estimated to take 100 to 500 years to fully decompose (Wibowo, t.t.: 2-3). In addition, he explains the impact of plastic waste on the environment as follows:

Environmental pollution by plastics includes contamination of soil, groundwater and underwater ecosystems. Plastic particles contain toxins that kill decomposing animals such as worms and PCBs that do not decompose, poisoning the food chain. In addition, plastics also disrupt the flow of water in the soil, reducing soil fertility and blocking air circulation and space for underground creatures that fertilize the soil. Biodegradable plastics can be carried by the wind into the ocean, harming marine animals such as dolphins, sea turtles and seals that mistake plastic for food. Even after the animal's death, the plastic in its body remains undecomposed, contaminating other animals. Indiscriminate disposal of plastic waste in rivers also causes siltation of rivers and blockage of flow that can lead to flooding.

2. Efforts for Environmental Waste Problems

The efforts that can be made include:

- Refuse and reduce the use of single-use items, especially plastics such as straws and plastic packaging when buying drinks and food outside.
- Always bring your own water bottle when traveling.
- Recycling recyclable waste, such as plastic, paper, cardboard, metal, glass, and fabric.
- Reduce consumption of unnecessary or excessive items

- Reuse items that are still fit for use or donate unused items.
- Decompose or compost organic waste, such as food scraps, leaves, twigs, and fruit peels.
- Educate the community on the importance of reducing waste and ways to do so. This will increase public awareness and participation in protecting the environment.

Islam, as one of the major religions, has comprehensive teachings that cover various aspects of human life, including the issue of household waste. Therefore, the solution to this waste problem needs to integrate values and guidelines from Islamic teachings, along with science and technical solutions. The concept of *ḥifẓ al-bī'ah*, which means protecting the environment, is one of the solutions that can be used to address the problem of household waste. This concept is based on Islamic religious principles and has a strong foundation in the Qur'an, which prohibits the destruction of the environment and encourages its preservation. Through the concept of *ḥifẓ al-bī'ah*, the hope is that religious leaders, sermons, and preachers can educate the public about the importance of protecting the environment, and convey the message that Islamic teachings encourage environmental preservation. With this awareness, Muslims in Indonesia are expected to play an active role in protecting the environment and minimizing the negative impact of the household waste problem, in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Managing the Environment Sustainably

Humans are the *khalifah* of God who are responsible for taking care of the earth and prospering it. They are given the power to manage the earth well, cultivate it wisely, and use their intelligence to produce benefits and natural wealth. In addition, they are entrusted with spreading true knowledge and adhering to religious guidance. Humans are *caliphs* who have great responsibility in managing various aspects of life on earth, including government, economy, education, and industry. Humans are the *caliphs* of Allah who are responsible for the earth and all creatures in it. Despite their high status, they must not abuse their power over nature. Humans were created to worship and are responsible for maintaining the natural ecosystem, which is also a place for flora and fauna that need to be maintained in the ecological management of this earth, it is

explained in surah al isra verse 70. In managing natural resources, humans must meet the following criteria:

- Give a reasonable place to other creatures and also to fellow humans on earth.
- Not excessive or greedy.
- Maintaining the balance of Allah's prescribed measure.
- Use reason (which produces knowledge for benefits) and taste (which reflects beauty, art) which aims humans to tawhid as the principles of Islam).

In preventing pollution in the environment, it is important to understand several things. This prevention is not only physical, but also depends on individual awareness based on faith. *Amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar*, as mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah, involves good actions that benefit individuals and society and involves prohibiting what is considered an evil. Surah An-Nisa' verse 114, Al-A'raf verse 119, and Luqman verse 27 of the Qur'an emphasize the importance of this, and carrying out this obligation has great benefits for Muslims. No one should avoid this obligation, as doing so is the key to safeguarding society from sin, physical calamity and spiritual disaster. In the context of public affairs relating to the community, the congregation, and the environment, mutual cooperation is essential in maintaining cleanliness. Good judgment about obligatory and non-obligatory tasks, as well as shoulds and should nots, is key in maintaining the common welfare. It is also important to avoid introducing foreign objects or large quantities that could disrupt the ecology, as all environmental damage is caused by human actions. Therefore, pollution prevention is an important effort to protect the environment and this world from damage created by humans. things related to environmental pollution, including:

- Illegal deforestation that can lead to flooding, erosion, landslides, etc.
- Littering, industrial waste that results in water pollution, a source of disease and can destroy animal habitats, etc.
- Air pollution leads to the spread of diseases for living beings.
- Immoral acts that can lead to social diseases, moral decadence.

As for overcoming environmental pollution is from human awareness itself. Things that must be known in overcoming pollution include:

- Teaching science, both through formal and non-formal education, to prepare the next generation who are able to work better towards environmental conservation

- Channelizing rivers for the benefit of people's lives and digging wells and ensuring the provision of clean water.
- Planting more productive plants to ensure sufficient food sources and environmental beauty.
- Building mosques as places of worship and community centers.
- Protecting endangered animals from their habitats by not excessively cutting down forests and replacing them immediately with new plants to maintain the balance and sustainability of forest functions.
- Using waste and industrial waste in a useful way, reducing all activities that can pollute the air, and applying amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar by returning to religious teachings (Islam) and being grateful.
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The success and sustainability of the environment is very influential on the level of community concern and attention. Because the environment is the responsibility of humans in terms of maintaining and developing it. There are several factors that influence people's unawareness of the environment (Safrihsyah & Fitriani, 2014: 72-73), namely ignorance, poverty, humanity, and lifestyle factors. Failure to manage natural resources by humans has caused damage to life and the environment. Human resources have two important aspects: quality and quantity. The quality of human beings or the quality of the population is strongly influenced by the environment that shapes their attitudes, behavior, skills, and intelligence. Education, training and development both in school and outside school play an important role in improving human quality.

The Manners of Animals and Plants in Preserving Them

As humans, we must make it a habit to love and care for animals. Allah created nature and all of it, including animals, to be given to humans. There are many benefits that can be taken from animals, including:

- Their meat contains protein which is needed by humans.
- The fur is used to make wool.
- Heavy load transportation tool.

- For beautiful scenery.
- Milk is a delicious and nutritious food and drink.
- Eggs are a source of protein for humans.

As humans, we must treat animals well and not abuse them. Manners towards animals include not hurting and torturing animals, feeding and drinking, not littering so that their habitat is maintained, and not hunting animals so that they do not become extinct. The Prophet said, "Allah commands you to be kind to all animals; if you kill, kill well, and if you slaughter, slaughter well. Let one of you sharpen his knife and slaughter quickly." (HR. Muslim). From the hadith, it can be understood that the use of animals must be in accordance with ethics.

Allah SWT is the most merciful to His servants. In addition to creating humans, Allah also created plants as the main source of food for humans. Humans need to eat rice, corn, wheat, cassava, sago, sweet potatoes, as staple foods, all of which come from plants. To make household furniture requires wood as raw material. For the beauty of the house and yard, a garden is needed which is arranged from colorful flowers and grass, which also includes plants. Humans raise livestock whose staple food is grass and plants. So it is clear how great the use and benefits of plants in human life. Ethics towards plants such as not destroying plants, planting and caring for them, not cutting down trees carelessly, and not littering so that the soil remains fertile.

Maintaining ethics towards animals and plants is very important to maintain the balance of nature and prevent environmental damage. As responsible humans, we must treat these creatures well so as not to disturb the ecosystem and other life. By behaving well towards animals and plants, we help preserve nature and create a cleaner and greener environment. Therefore, it is our responsibility as humans to protect, respect and preserve the earth, living creatures and their environment for the benefit of ourselves and future generations, as Allah SWT says in the Qur'an.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This article outlines and analyzes the Islamic view of the environment and relates it to real environmental issues in Indonesia, such as forest fires in Kalimantan and river pollution in Java. The study shows that Islam provides a solid moral and ethical basis for

caring for and preserving the universe as a gift of Allah. The Islamic view of the environment highlights the concept of tawhid, responsibility as khalifah of the earth, and values such as justice, trust, and mercy. These principles should serve as a reference for Muslims in interacting with the environment and participating in preserving the universe. In relation to environmental issues such as the problem of waste, Islam can provide an understanding of environmental protection, respect for natural resources, and responsible action. Islam also teaches the importance of social justice, including the maintenance of good hygiene. Based on this study, I provide several suggestions for caring for and preserving the environment from an Islamic perspective, including increasing environmental education and awareness, interfaith cooperation, strict supervision and regulation, and community empowerment, especially for affected communities. By following these suggestions, it is hoped that Muslims in Indonesia can play an active role in caring for and preserving the environment in accordance with Islamic teachings, and contribute to answering the environmental challenges currently faced.

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